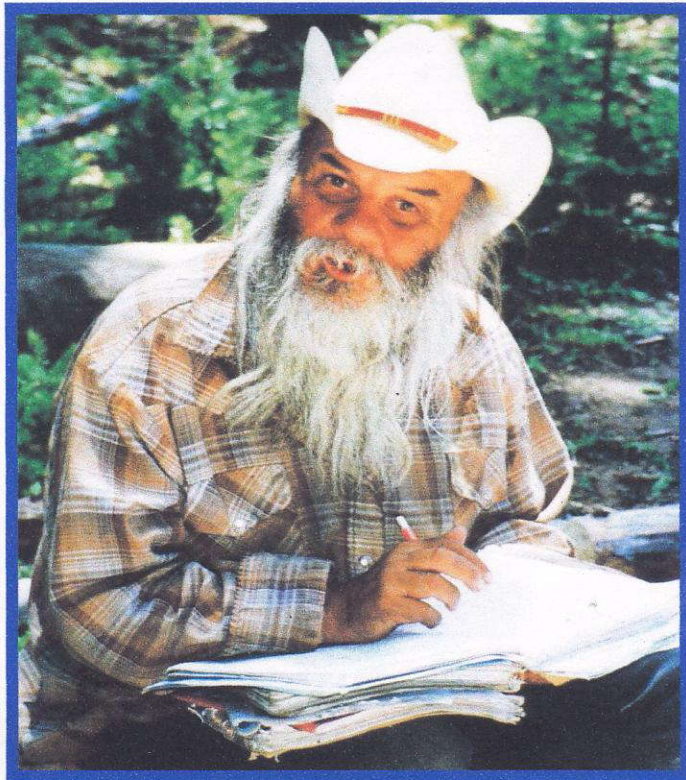




# Rainbow Family Life Stories



*by Jodey Bateman.  
Interviews with Rainbow  
Family of Living Light  
folks conducted between  
1977 and 2008.*

*Scanned in 2018.*

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12.A MOONSTONE - "Rebuild the Waste Places"  
- interviewed in 1979 in Arizona

13 pages

[12.A]

## 1. Moonstone

[Moonstone is one of the people who were control to setting up Flowering Tree. She lives with Michael Buffalo, a Vietnam vet, who brought food and medical supplies in to the besieged American Indian Movement camp at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, in January, 1973. She gives the fullest account of the Desert House incident that made Phil Coyote consider suicide.]

### Moonstone: Rebuild the Waste Places

I was born in Chicago in 1946. My mother was a very creative woman who studied piano at the Chicago Conservatory and also painting. She was a very cultured lady who came from a family that made a lot in the stock market and lost all their money in the Depression and she still has a better-than-thou attitude toward many people.

My father was one of eleven kids, born in Georgia. His parents came to Chicago. When they died, he was raised in a boys' home. He was a very gregarious person. He became a salesman. He was the district manager for four or five different companies. He traveled all the time. He died a couple of years ago. I think what killed him was eating restaurant food for thirty years -- also sweets and liquor. Because he wasn't even sixty when he died.

My father loved all kinds of music -- a lot of classical. He had a lot of records. He really got into developing a lot of speakers and amplifiers. I feel lucky that I got exposed to a lot of good music. I played flute in the high school band.

When I was six, we moved from Chicago to Memphis, Tennessee, and lived there almost three years. When we lived in Memphis, I went to ballet school for one year. I really loved it. I think that was one of my happiest years. I never had training again until I was nineteen.

We moved to Kansas City for three years. Then we moved to Atlanta, Georgia, for eight years. I was in Atlanta when Lester Maddox was hitting people with baseball bats for trying to go to his restaurant. I wasn't involved in civil rights. I was just in high school.

I went to two years of college in Atlanta. Then I got married when I was nineteen to a guy who graduated from Georgia Tech. We moved from Atlanta to LA in '65. Moving out of the stagnant atmosphere of Atlanta to California was like walking out of a grave into a new life. I was amazed at how free people were.

I applied to go to UCLA and became a dance major. I had this real affinity to dance. I had all my courses like history out of the way in Atlanta, so all I took at UCLA was things like lighting, make-up, choreography, music. So when people talk about college, I say if you've got the right teachers, it's fun. Dancing changed my life. 'Cause the way UCLA used to teach dancing was to base it on what was really deep inside of you so your dancing would be an expression of yourself. So I started getting into who I was.

Simultaneously what was happening was my husband, who was an aerospace engineer for Douglas Aircraft, wanted to make a million dollars by the time he was thirty. So he worked all the time they

could give him, and our relationship deteriorated into nothing. After about four and a half years, I started going crazy, because the dance was revealing the deepest part of me. And at this time, 1969, hippies, flower children, were getting all this publicity. I would see pictures of these hippies in their beautiful clothes and I would say, "Yeah, right on. That's how I want to live." So I left with my suitcase full of nothing but leotards. I was moving in with my girlfriend. My husband offered to drive me and I said, "If you're running away from home you don't get your father to drive you."

I was a graduate student at UCLA. I taught dance. I met this guy who was a graduate in sociology. When he first came into my dance class, I felt my soul go out to him. He was the first person who ever told me, "Do what you feel." He taught me to consult the I Ching and to smoke grass -- not just to space out on it. He was creative like me. He was a really beautiful person. He's still one of my best friends. I feel we were soul mates on one level in past lives for centuries.

We lived together for two years. Then LA started getting really ugly to me. Driving to UCLA, it was all brown. Billboards really got to me like, "Look at me! Buy me!"

My friend got a job at Central Washington State in Ellensburg, Washington, in August, 1970. It was a whole new world to me, like living on the earth for the first time since I was a kid barefoot in Memphis. We lived in a little house on a sheepfarm.



I used to dance outdoors stoned in Washington all the time, which was totally different from the way I danced at UCLA. I started really relating to nature again. The college was real open to me coming and teaching, but I didn't want to teach in academia because I didn't want to give grades.

After living there for a year, the dance school asked me to do a concert. I hadn't really worked on dance for two years. I didn't have the discipline. So all I would do was go sit by the creek and meditate and pray that a dance would come to me. The day came. The people who were writing the program for the concert asked me the name of my dance. I said "Oh, I guess it's called Story."

About a week before the concert, this dance came to me. I know it came from the earth and the Great Spirit with no music but the sound of my voice. I did it at the concert and for several other audiences. It was a special dance to me. I went down to UCLA and did it for a sociology class. Every time I did this dance, I learned something from it because it didn't come from me.

I tried to get a dance studio together because I didn't like teaching at the college because I think dance should be in a temple, a consecrated place. I found a studio in the backstage of a hippie restaurant.

Then I moved to Wyoming. I went to visit a friend at Jackson Hole, Wyoming. I heard that Jackson Hole had three summer stock theaters that nobody used in the winter. There was a woman there who taught dance and I got some other partners -- the bank

president's wife and a ski bum. We taught dance. In two of the theaters that weren't used in the winter, we gave two concerts a year. We got a grant from the National Endowment of the Arts and we could buy costumes. We had all this money to play with.

It was fun, but it was very limiting. It was a small community and I was the dance teacher -- that's all I was. At the end of two years, I got pregnant and consulted this astrologer. She said, on one particular day, good karma would be released. That was the day of our dance concert. It was like the end of a cycle. My desire to teach dance in a small town was fulfilled and it was gone. It was over and that was good. So I decided I'd have an abortion. I went to Washington to have an abortion. I never realized I wanted to have kids until. So I was really confused.

Then that summer, 1974, I went to the Rainbow Gathering in Utah. After being in Wyoming where everybody was so conservative, there was all these naked hippies around and I went, "My people!" I took off my clothes. One of the first people I met was Bear and he painted my face.

That's when I first saw Michael at a spaghetti dinner for 3,000. He had a puppy dog cradled in one arm and dog food in one hand. At that gathering I really wanted everybody to dance together. I went up on a hilltop and made a great big circle of rock. I wanted everybody to dance together, but they didn't. That's still the vision I would like to see manifest.

After the Rainbow Gathering, I had a \$100 Ford Fairlane XLT Galaxy -- red with bucket seats. I joined a Rainbow Caravan to Spokane, Washington, to the World's Fair. On the way we went to

Zion National Park. Eleven vehicles, seventy people. We freaked Zion Park out and they asked us to leave. We went on to Virgin River. Dominic was there, Medicine Story was there. Bear stole \$40 from my dashboard and took off with Peter. So Happy.

One night on the caravan, we ate peyote and took a sweat. Then I shared my special dance with them. We took off to the north and the caravan got divided into two groups of vehicles that traveled at the same rate of speed. One school bus had such a hard time, everybody had to get off in the middle of the night so the bus could go uphill. I was really impressed at the two Rainbow ladies who could get up and cook dinner for sixty-five in the middle of the night.

We got to Provo, Utah, and stopped to look for jobs picking cherries. That was one of the first mornings I ever met Michael. We made a fruit salad together. Paul Raindrop got a lot of flour and honey and baking things for free. He found a Mormon youth center called the Gathering Place, where we made a lot of bread and cookies and rolls.

That night Michael and me took a walk -- one of the nicest walks I ever took in my whole life. I fell in love with him. Then fifteen or twenty of use went together to an orchard to pick cherries for a couple of days. I was so in love with Michael, all I wanted was to be with him and not fifteen or twenty Rainbow cherry pickers. So I took off with Michael and Raindrop in my red car to pick up my tipi in Ellensburg, Washington. It took us three weeks to get there.

We got there and my tipi got ripped off. It just blew me away. Michael said, "I'm going back east. Do you want to come?"

I said, "Sure."

I'd never been hitch-hiking. That's how we went. We hitched from Washington State to New York. It took us two weeks. Every night we stayed in a different person's home and Michael would cook for them with food we got from supermarket dumpsters. We went barefoot with just two blankets and no money. We were reading Seven Arrows and we read from it to everybody we met. It was a real introduction to America for me. It was such a builder of faith. That was where I gave Michael the name Buffalo for being a give-away animal.

We stopped in Chicago and saw my grandmother. Then we went on. I got pregnant. I think I conceived my son Crow Boy under a freeway bridge near Washington, D.C. When we got to New York, we saw my mother. Michael Buffalo was beginning to grow dreadlocks. To my mother, he was a nigger. The last words she said to me when we left were, "If you ever want to come back to normal society, I'll send you a ticket."

"You have to have a ticket to get in?" I asked.

"An airplane ticket," she said.

We met Michael Buffalo's parents. They are Italian, nice people, very loyal to their family. Then we went to the Florida Keys and then we met Raindrop in Arizona on Hallowe'en, the second full moon in October. We spent a month in northern Arizona by Winslow in \_\_\_\_\_ (p.7). Then we spent a real mellow month in a canyon near Mexico living really simply and communally.



Then we went to Washington to have my son Yarrow who is also called Crow Boy. I consider Washington to be one of my old homes. We made our first tipi together as a family. We went to the Barter Fair and wanted to come south again. When Crow Boy was seven months old, we headed south in a VW bus that averaged about twenty-five miles an hour all the way. We lived at a place called the Desert House near Tucson. The only people when we were first there were Chamai and her son Antelope. In about 2-1/2 months it grew to about fifty people on two acres.

We had to haul in every drop of water we used. During the Christmas season they had three really good peyote meetings. They painted peyote birds on Chamai's tipi.

Then we had one more peyote meeting. Raindrop went to get the peyote, and got in debt to do it and he had never been in debt in his life. It was his ego trip that he could get lots of peyote. Michael Buffalo was sick, but Raindrop insisted he should go with him. When Michael Buffalo got back, he was almost dead so he had to go to bed, so neither of us took part. Phil Coyote was the road man. They made a rattle and a water drum and some other things for the ceremony and during the ceremony they all broke. Even the peyote road that they drew on the ground got scattered. People got sick at the meeting. Phil Coyote told me he thought the spirit of Quannah Parker appeared at the meeting and said, "Don't mess with peyote because you're not ready for it yet."

That morning as they came out of the tipi the cops showed up. They were very polite, but they told everybody to get in a circle to see these wanted posters. When I saw the cops I went

running to the tipi to see if there was any more peyote. There was a basket with hundreds of buttons. I said, "Come on, Chamai and Song Feather, we gotta bury it." So we ran into the desert with police planes circling overhead and we scraped a hole with our hands under a cholla plant and buried the peyote.

Then we looked up and saw a cop car. The cops only found one button. I knew the Federal narcs would be back, so I gave the buttons to Phil Coyote to bury and he gave them to a brother named Toe. The Federal narcs did come back that day. The only people they did want to speak to was Chamai and me. They asked us what we were doing in the desert. I said Chamai was helping me take an enema. One of the cops said, "Did you shit out this?" and held out a big peyote button.

I said, "No, I didn't," and all the cops and everyone laughed. They said, "Where's the peyote?" and I said I didn't know.

He said, "Look, I'm a Federal narcotics agent." Now I know what Federal narcs look like. They are the cleanest people I have ever seen. And I said, "I still don't know where the peyote is."

So they wanted us to go back to the tipi to look at our I.D. Michael Buffalo had some peyote drying there. I was praying to the Archangel Michael to confuse them. Michael Buffalo remembers reading that the soldiers hated to enter Indian tipis because they considered them to be smoky holes. So he put a whole to of wood on the fire and the cops didn't come in because it was too smoky and they left.

People started coming out of the desert where they had been hiding. We put all the kids on one of our school buses and everyone was out of there in four hours.

Nobody wanted us in Tucson. When Dennis and Donna hitched into Tucson, the cops stopped them and told them to get out. We went on a dumpster run and supposedly Squeaky Me, our dog, bit a guard there. So here we were in hiding in a friend's house in Tucson and cops came. Sunlight, our friend, wouldn't let them in. I was paranoid. Michael Buffalo was super sick in bed. The cops didn't have a warrant.

Next day six of us left Tucson and went to Gardner Canyon. Song Feather negotiated for us to make a big sign for a lady who had a store in Patagonia, Arizona, for \$300. That was enough for us to get up north to Washington. We went to the first All One Family Healing Gathering at Eden Hot Springs Equinox, 1976. There was a lot of controversy there between dog-owners and non-doggers. Stephen Gold, who ran Eden, was so anti-dog that Sunlight's dog, who was a very mellow dog, ran up and bit him. Ba and Heinz saw a rainbow going into a supermarket dumpster. They found two cases of eggs. When they took them to the Eden Healing Gathering and made fried potatoes and eggs for everybody, some people there freaked. We did the clean-up at the Healing Gathering.

We went to Hopi Land. We went to Bacovia where Raindrop had lived for two years off and on. It's the non-traditional village with electricity across the road from Hotevila, the traditional

village where Grandfather David lives, which has no electricity. We were there for Easter.

The first dance we went to was at Walpi in First Mesa on Palm Sunday. They had clowns who really singled us out. Michael Buffalo had dreadlocks and the clowns grabbed him and put a robe on him and said, "Now you be Jesus and tell us what to do."

We heard that the Hopi young people didn't want to plant corn any more so we went to ask the old people if they needed any help planting. We saw all these deserted cornfields that were no longer planted and we asked people if we could plant our crops there and they said, "You'll have to ask the clan." Because almost any piece of land you see belongs to the clans. And I had to wear a bra and a skirt and I wanted my freedom, so we left after two weeks to look for more land to live on. I realized I wanted to be around hippies. They're my people -- those free, dirty and loving people.

We split up in Hopi Land. Heinz and Song Feather stayed in Arizona. Dennis and Donna went east. Michael Buffalo and me went to Washington and blew up two VW engines getting there. We were led to this place called Flowering Tree. It was an old medicine lake. The only thing left of the Lake was a spring and very fertile land. There was an old Indian village there. There were about fifty mounds in four lines.

We lived there for two years and attracted about thirty people. My son, Dancing Johnny was born there. It was a very happy place. It made our family so strong to have a piece of land

to live on. We were caretakers. To live with a group of people steady does amazing things for you.

The Land was owned by five different people. Two of them had built a dome on the land. I think they thought of it as a vacation and retirement place, but they couldn't give up their city ways. Three of the owners really dug us, but the other two watched our population grow and got alarmed. They put us off. They said it was to give the Land a rest, but it was also the Great Spirit spreading us to share the enormous strength we had gained.

We prayed for the place we wanted. We sent out some scouts and they scouted a place called God's Garden in Idaho. We moved there with horses and donkeys. We traded a school bus for the land. We made a really beautiful two-acre garden, but the vibration wasn't right. It was forest land and we were desert people. You see, the Flowering Tree was in open country -- sagebrush, scattered pine, occasional cactus.

The horse people in the family couldn't ride horses around God's Garden because the forest was so thick. Besides that, there were questions about land ownership and land payments.

Spring was so late there, so we couldn't garden and we got really discouraged. We said, "Let's go south." We went to the 1978 Oregon Rainbow Gathering.

So Michael Buffalo and I and Patty and Blackjack went to Lorient and then to Chico where we harvested thousands of pounds of figs. Then we traveled to Utah with Earthworm and Van.



Earthworm got hepatitis real bad. We went to Eden and spread the hepatitis around. Since then we've spent the winter in Arizona.

We got moved to New Mexico in the springtime to make a garden -- and answer to our prayers to finally plant a field of blue corn. We wanted to plant food for the 1979 Arizona Gathering, but we didn't get our garden spot soon enough to.

Our Land is near the old Pueblo ruins near Reserve, New Mexico. Like the Bible prophesies, "Rebuild the waste places and inhabit the ruins again."

[As of early 1990, Moonstone and Michael Buffalo are still with the Flowering Tree group in Washington State.]